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FM (b)(3):10 USC 424
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SUBJI THIS IS IR (b)(3):10 USC 424
1. ARGENTINA AR
2. REPORT NUMBER (b)(3):10 USC 424
3. TITLE ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ POLITICAL MILITARY - DISCUSSIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS WITH MG DIAZ BESSONE
4. PROJECT NUMBER N/A
5. DATE OF INFORMATION 780126
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7. DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION 780126, BUENOS AIRES
8. REFERENCE (b)(3):10 USC 424
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10. ORIGINATOR (b)(3):10 USC 424
11. REQUEST EVALUATION OMIT
12. PREPARING OFFICER (b)(3):10 USC 424
13. APPROVING OFFICER

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14. (b)(3):10 USC 424

15. ~~SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS NOFORN TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVT DIRC NO~~

16. SUMMARY ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THIS IR FORWARDS INFORMATION ON MG DIAZ BESSONES REACTION TO US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES.

22. DETAILS ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ON 26 JAN 78 Sec. 3.3(b) (1) Sec. 3.3(b) (1) FOR THE FORMER PLANNING MINISTER MG DIAZ BESSONE, AND ONE OF HIS UNDERSECRETARIES. THE GENERAL HAD INDI CATED THAT HE WANTED TO TALK PRIVATLY (b)(3):10 USC 424 AND ASKED IF THEY COULD ARRANGE THE GET TOGETHER SINCE HE NO LONGER HAD FACILITIES AT THE PLANNING MINISTRY. MG DIZZ BESSONE AS ALWAYS, WAS OPEN AND TALKATIVE. THE GENERAL IS CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE ARMY HQ WITHOUT A SPECIFIC JOB. HE SAYS HE DOES NOT PLAN TO REQUEST RETIREMENT AT THIS TIME.

2. THE GENERAL ASKED Sec. 3.3(b) (1) THEIR OPIONIONS OF THE STATUS OF US/ARGENTINE RELATIONS, COMMENTING THAT IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE TWO NATIONS TO MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) RELATIONS WERE NOT GOOD AND WOULD PROBABLY GET WORSE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, DIAZ BESSONE EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE RESPONSE SAYING THAT HIS PERCEPTION WAS THAT THE SITUATION WAS IMPROVING. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) THE BASIC CAUSE FOR DETERIORATING RELATIONS WAS THE CONTINUING DISREGARD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA AND POINTED OUT THAT A FEW HIGHLY PUBLICIZED CASES WERE SEVERELY DAMAGING TO ARGENTINAS IMAGE IN THE US. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) ASKED THE GENERAL WHY, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS JACOBO TIMERMAN STILL BEING DETAINED BY THE EXECUTIVE POWER. THEY POINTED OUT THAT MORE THAN ADEQUATE TIME HAS ELAPSED TO BRING HIM TO TRIAL. IF CONVICTED HE SHOULD BE SENTENCED; IF EXONERATED, HE SHOULD BE SET FREE. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) THEN ASKED THE GENERAL IF HE COULD PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ON THE DECEMBER DISAPPEARANCE OF THE TWO FRENCH NUNS AND SEVERAL OF THE MOTHERS FROM THE PLAZA DE MAYO.

3. MG DIAZ BESSONE LISTED ATTENTIVELY TO THE CRIT ICISM AND WAS OBVIOUSLY SHAKED BY IT. HE ATTEMPTED TO RESPOND BUT RESORTED TO WELL WORN RHETORIC THAT HAS BEEN HEARD MANY TIMES Sec. 3.3(b) (1) BEFORE. IN TIMERMANS CASE HE CAREFULLY EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT ANTI SEMITIC, ONLY DETERMINED TO BRING TO JUSTICE A DELINQUENT WHO HAD AIDED THE TERRORISTS. NO ONE DENIES THAT TIMERMAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN SHADY DEALINS IN THE PAST, BUT NO ONE WILL REALLY KNOW FOR SURE UNTIL HE IS BROUGHT TO TRIAL. Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

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THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT THE DAMAGE BEING CAUSED TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENTS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE BY HOLDING ON TO TIMERMAN IS PERHAPS TOO HIGH A PRICE TO PAY AND THAT THE CASE HAS IMPORTANT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AS WELL AS JURIDICAL ONES.

4. MG DIAZ BESSONE THEN ADDRESSED THE CASE OF THE FRENCH NUNS, CLAIMING IGNORANCE OF THE DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT AND NO KNOWLEDGE OF PRESIDENT VIDELAS LETTER TO THE FRENCH PRESIDENT. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) A MAN OF HIS STATURE IN THE GOVERNMENT AND ONE WHO ATTENDED CABINET MEETINGS, WOULD NOT BE AWARE OF THE DETAILS OF SUCH AN IMPORTANT AND HIGHLY PUBLICIZED ISSUE. AT THAT POINT, THE UNDERSECRETARY OF PLANNING INTERRUPTED TO INFORM THE GENERAL THAT NO ONE BELIEVES THE GOVERNMENTS STATEMENTS ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FRENCH NUNS, HE POINTED OUT THAT TOO MANY CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS HAD BEEN RELEASED AND THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS EITHER LYING OR COVERNING UP. HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN TO THE GENERAL THAT MUCH OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED RECENTLY HAS GIVEN FOREIGNERS AND ARGENTINES ALIKE, THE IMPRESSION THAT PRESIDENT VIDELA IS LOSING CONTROL.

COMMENT ~~(C)~~ MG DIAZ BESSONES PURPOSE FOR MEETING Sec. 3.3(b) (1) [redacted] WAS TO DISCUSS HIS POLITICAL FUTURE, NO HUMAN RIGHTS. THAT PART OF THE DISCUSSION WILL BE DISCUSSED IN A SEPARATE IR. THE FORMER PLANNING MINISTER WAS NOT PREPARED FOR SUCH AN ON SLAUGHT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND HAD DIFFICULTY ANSWERING PENETRATING QUESTIONS. HIS CONFIDENCE WAS FURTHER SHAKEN WHEN HIS OWN UNDERSECRETARY (AND LONG TIME FRIEND) ATTACKED THE VIDELA GOVERN MENTS INTERNATIONAL CREDIBILITY. THERE IS LITT DOUBT THAT DIAZ BESSONE GOT THE MESSAGE, WHETHER HE STILL HAS ENOUGH INFLU ENCE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, OR WHETHER HE EVEN WANTS TO DO ANYTHING, REMAINS TO BE SEEN. HE CLAIMS THAT HI IS STILL ON GOOD TERMS WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA AND OTHERS IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF THIS IS TRUE, PERHAPS THE PRESIDENT WILL HEAR ONCE AGAIN THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES ARE INJURING THE ARGENTINE IMAGE ABRAOD. EVEN THOUGH THE HUMAN RIGHTS DISCUSSION APPEARED TO BE CONFRONTATIONAL IN NATURE, IT WAS NOT. THE GENERAL WAS CONGENIAL AND FRANK AS HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN MEETINGS Sec. 3.3(b) (1) [redacted] UPON DEPARTURE HE STATED THAT WE MUST GET TOGETHER AGAIN AT SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE IN ORDER TO CONTINUE OUR SERIES OF CANDID CONVERSATIONS. THIS MSG COORD W/AMEMBASSY. ~~GDS DEC 84~~

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